



The Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills

REFORMATION

October 29, 2023

PRELUDE

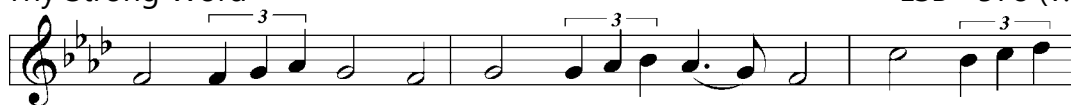
"Trumpet Tune"

arr. S.D. Wolff

OPENING HYMN

"Thy Strong Word"

LSB #578 (v. 1-3)



1 Thy strong word did cleave the dark - ness; At Thy  
2 Lo, on those who dwelt in dark - ness, Dark as  
3 Thy strong Word be - speaks us righ - teous; Bright with



speak - ing it was done. For cre - at - ed  
night and deep as death, Broke the light of  
Thine own ho - li - ness, Glo - rious now, we



light we thank Thee, While Thine or - dered sea - sons run.  
Thy sal - va - tion, Breathed Thine own life - breath - ing breath.  
press toward glo - ry, And our lives our hopes con - fess.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to



Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,  
Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,  
Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!  
al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!  
al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!

## CALL TO WORSHIP

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

For I am not ashamed of the gospel,

**For it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.**

For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith,

**For as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."**

*~Romans 1:16-17*

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

**Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for His sake God forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ He gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit. May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

## INTROIT

*~select verses from Romans 6*

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ were baptized into his death?

**Do you know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ were baptized into his life?**

We were buried with him by baptism into death,  
**so that we might be alive in Christ!**

For if we have been united with him in a death like his,  
**we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.**

If we have died with Christ,  
**We believe we will live with Christ.**

We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again;  
**Death no longer has dominion over him.**

For the death he died he died to sin, once for all,  
**But the life he lives he lives to God.**

So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Amen!**

## + BIBLE PRESENTATION TO THIRD GRADERS +

*Grace Barnett  
Eve Blackenburg  
Luna Capote  
Sydney Coffee  
Abigail Craig  
Klara Dietrich*

*Bauer Gale  
Grayson Karayan  
Rachel King  
Emerson Mathers  
William Perry  
Rosemary Tallo*

### RESPONSE

"God's Word Is Our Heritage"

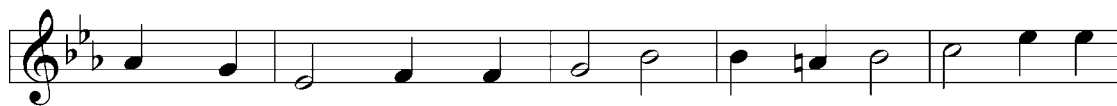
LSB #582



God's Word is our great her - i - tage And shall be ours for -



ev - er; To spread its light from age to age Shall be our



chief en - deav - or. Through life it guides our way, In death it



is our stay. Lord, grant, while worlds en - dure, We keep its



teach - ings pure Through - out all gen - er - a - tions.

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Almighty God, gracious Lord, pour out Your Holy Spirit on Your faithful people. Keep them steadfast in Your grace and truth, protect and comfort them in all temptations, defend them against all enemies of Your Word, and bestow on the Church Your saving peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **FIRST READING**

Revelation 14:6-7

*(An Eternal Gospel)*

<sup>6</sup>Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. <sup>7</sup>And he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water."

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **CHORAL ANTHEM** (10:30 a.m.)

J. Althouse

*"Built on a Rock"*

*Built on a rock, the Church will stand, even when steeples are falling.*

*Built on a rock, in ev'ry land. Christ, our Lord, is calling.*

*Calling to the young and the old to rest. Calling to the souls of those oppressed.*

*Built on a rock, the Church will stand. Christ, our Lord, is calling.*

*This is a house of living stone built for God's habitation.*

*He is a rock, on humble throne granting us salvation.*

*Whenever two or more come to seek His face, God will be among them to show His grace.*

*He is a rock, and this His place, granting us salvation.*

*Built on a rock, the Church will stand firmly on one foundation.  
Built on a rock in ev'ry land, this, God's new creation.  
Together we have come for to give and receive. In Christ, our Lord, we do believe.  
Built on a rock, the Church will stand. This, God's new creation.  
This, God's new creation. Built on a rock, the Church will stand.  
Built on a rock, the Church will stand.  
Built on a rock. Built on a rock. Built on a rock.  
Christ, our Lord, is calling.  
Christ, our Lord, is calling.*

## **EPISTLE READING**

Romans 3:19-28

*(The Righteousness of God through Faith)*

<sup>19</sup>Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. <sup>20</sup>For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. <sup>21</sup>But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— <sup>22</sup>the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: <sup>23</sup>for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup>and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup>whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. <sup>26</sup>It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. <sup>27</sup>Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. <sup>28</sup>For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

# GOSPEL PREPARATION HYMN

"Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word"

LSB #655



1 Lord, keep us stead - fast in Your Word; Curb those who  
2 Lord Je - sus Christ, Your pow'r make known, For You are  
3 O Com - fort - er of price - less worth, Send peace and



by de - ceit or sword Would wrest the king - dom from Your  
Lord of lords a - lone; De - fend Your ho - ly Church that  
u - ni - ty on earth; Sup - port us in our fi - nal



Son And bring to naught all He has done.  
we May sing Your praise e - ter - nal - ly.  
strife And lead us out of death to life.

## HOLY GOSPEL

John 8:31-36

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the eighth chapter.

### **Glory to You, O Lord.**

*(The Truth Will Set You Free)*

<sup>31</sup>So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, <sup>32</sup>and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." <sup>33</sup>They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?"

<sup>34</sup>Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. <sup>35</sup>The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. <sup>36</sup>So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

### **Praise to You, O Christ.**



**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

LSB #657 (v. 1-2,4)



1 A might - y for - tress is our God, A sword and shield vic -  
 2 No strength of ours can match his might. We would be lost, re -  
 4 God's Word for - ev - er shall a - bide, No thanks to foes, who



to - rious; He breaks the cruel op - pres - sor's rod And wins sal -  
 ject - ed. But now a cham - pion comes to fight, Whom God Him -  
 fear it; For God Him - self fights by our side With weap - ons



va - tion glo - rious. The old sa - tan - ic foe Has sworn to  
 self e - lect - ed. You ask who this may be? The Lord of  
 of the Spir - it. Were they to take our house, Goods, hon - or,



work us woe. With craft and dread - ful might He  
 hosts is He, Christ Je - sus, might - y Lord, God's  
 child, or spouse, Though life be wrenched a - way, They



arms him - self to fight. On earth he has no e - qual.  
 on - ly Son, a - dored. He holds the field vic - to - rious.  
 can - not win the day. The King - dom's ours for - ev - er!

## **SERMON**

*"United We Stand"*  
**Romans 6:5**  
Rev. Michael Ahlemeyer

## **OFFERING**

*~please sign the Record of Fellowship during the offering*

## **VOLUNTARY**

"Worship and Praise Our Lord and King" (10:30 a.m.)

LCVH Handbell Choir

## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

Lord in Your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

## **THE PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**Amen.**

*~please be seated for the Distribution~*

## DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice"

LSB #556



1 Dear Chris-tians, one and all, re-joice, With ex-ul-ta-tion  
2 Fast bound in Sa-tan's chains I lay; Death brood-ed dark-ly  
3 My own good works all came to naught, No grace or mer-it  
4 But God had seen my wretch-ed state Be-fore the world's foun-



spring-ing, And with u-nit-ed heart and voice And ho-ly  
o'er me. Sin was my tor-ment night and day; In sin my  
gain-ing; Free will a-against God's judg-ment fought, Dead to all  
da-tion, And mind-ful of His mer-cies great, He planned for



rap-ture sing-ing, Pro-claim the won-ders God has done, How  
moth-er bore me. But dai-ly deep-er still I fell; My  
good re-main-ing. My fears in-creased till sheer de-spair Left  
my sal-va-tion. He turned to me a fa-ther's heart; He



His right arm the vic-t'ry won. What price our ran-som cost Him!  
life be-came a liv-ing hell, So firm-ly sin pos-sessed me.  
on-ly death to be my share; The pangs of hell I suf-fered.  
did not choose the eas-y part But gave His dear-est trea-sure.

"In the Wonder of His Grace" (10:30 a.m.)

LCVH Adult Choir

*~the Distribution Hymns continue on the following page~*

## DISTRIBUTION HYMNS (continued)

### "Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness"

LSB #563



1 Je - sus, Thy blood and righ - teous - ness My beau - ty  
2 Bold shall I stand in that great day, Cleansed and re -  
3 Lord, I be - lieve Thy pre - cious blood, Which at the  
4 Lord, I be - lieve, were sin - ners more Than sands up -



are, my glo - rious dress; Midst flam - ing worlds, in  
deemed, no debt to pay; Ful - ly ab - solved through  
mer - cy seat of God Pleads for the cap - tives'  
on the o - cean shore, Thou hast for all a



these ar - rayed, With joy shall I lift up my head.  
these I am From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.  
lib - er - ty, Was al - so shed in love for me.  
ran - som paid, For all a full a - tone - ment made.

5 When from the dust of death I rise  
To claim my mansion in the skies,  
This then shall be my only plea:  
Jesus hath lived and died for me.

6 Jesus, be endless praise to Thee,  
Whose boundless mercy hath for me,  
For me, and all Thy hands have made,  
An everlasting ransom paid.

"Salvation unto Us Has Come"

LSB #555



1 Sal - va - tion un - to us has come By God's free grace and fa - vor;  
2 What God did in His Law de - mand And none to Him could ren - der  
3 It was a false, mis - lead - ing dream That God His Law had giv - en  
4 From sin our flesh could not ab - stain, Sin held its sway un - ceas - ing;



Good works can - not a - vert our doom, They help and save us nev - er.  
Caused wrath and woe on ev - 'ry hand For man, the vile of - fend - er.  
That sin - ners could them - selves re - deem And by their works gain heav - en.  
The task was use - less and in vain, Our guilt was e'er in - creas - ing.



Faith looks to Je - sus Christ a - lone, Who did for all the  
Our flesh has not those pure de - sires The spir - it of the  
The Law is but a mir - ror bright To bring the in - bred  
None can re - move sin's poi - soned dart Or pu - ri - fy our



world a - tone; He is our one Re - deem - er.  
Law re - quires, And lost is our con - di - tion.  
sin to light That lurks with - in our na - ture.  
guile - ful heart— So deep is our cor - rup - tion.

**POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

*~Luther's Morning Prayer*

**I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

## BLESSING

The Lord Almighty bless us and direct our days and our deeds in His peace.

**Amen.**

## CLOSING HYMN

"Thy Strong Word"

LSB #578 (v. 4-6)

4 From the cross Thy wis - dom shin - ing Break - eth  
forth in con - qu'ring might; From the cross for -  
ev - er beam - eth All Thy bright re - deem - ing light.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to  
Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,  
al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of six staves of music. The lyrics are placed below the notes. There are three triplet markings (indicated by a '3' above a bracket) in each staff: the first triplet in the first staff, the second triplet in the second staff, and the third triplet in the third staff. The final staff ends with a double bar line.

5 Give us lips to sing Thy glory,  
Tongues Thy mercy to proclaim,  
Throats that shout the hope that fills us,  
Mouths to speak Thy holy name.  
Alleluia, alleluia!  
May the light which Thou dost send  
Fill our songs with alleluias,  
Alleluias without end!

6 God the Father, light-creator,  
To Thee laud and honor be.  
To Thee, Light of Light begotten,  
Praise be sung eternally.  
Holy Spirit, light-revealer,  
Glory, glory be to Thee.  
Mortals, angels, now and ever  
Praise the holy Trinity!

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **POSTLUDE**

“Trumpet Finale”

arr. S.D. Wolff



*Thank you to our Trumpeter Dr. James Zingara*



## THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF VESTAVIA HILLS

201 So. Montgomery Highway Birmingham, Alabama 35216  
 Church office: 205-823-1883 PreSchool/MDO: 205-791-5200  
 Web Site: [www.vestavialutheran.org](http://www.vestavialutheran.org)  
 WORSHIP: 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sundays  
 SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:15 a.m.  
 Church Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday



PASTOR: The Reverend Michael D. Ahlemeyer – [pastor@vestavialutheran.org](mailto:pastor@vestavialutheran.org) text: 205-201-8866  
 PASTOR EMERITUS: The Reverend Clifford Hellmers – [vestluth@juno.com](mailto:vestluth@juno.com)  
 VICAR: Matthew Vatthauer – [vicar@vestavialutheran.org](mailto:vicar@vestavialutheran.org)  
 DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY: Ruth Johnson – [ruthinbham@gmail.com](mailto:ruthinbham@gmail.com)  
 DIRECTOR OF MOTHER'S DAY OUT: Brooke Heisler – [bheisler@vestavialutheran.org](mailto:bheisler@vestavialutheran.org)  
 CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR: Leigh Walter – [lwalter@vestavialutheran.org](mailto:lwalter@vestavialutheran.org)  
 CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR ASSISTANT: Amy Alvis - [aalvis@vestavialutheran.org](mailto:aalvis@vestavialutheran.org)  
 BOOK KEEPER: Melanie Goodson - [bookkeeper@vestavialutheran.org](mailto:bookkeeper@vestavialutheran.org)  
 ADOPTED MEDICAL MISSIONARIES - Arianna and David Shirk, Madeline & Annabelle - [shirkdavid@gmail.com](mailto:shirkdavid@gmail.com)



TO OUR GUESTS: We offer you a warm welcome in the name of Jesus. Please sign the Friendship Register. If you do not have a church home, we would be delighted to have you become a part of our church family. Please feel free to speak with the Pastor about membership in our congregation. If you do have a church home, we pray that God will bless you as you continue your growth in faith and love.



SUNDAY SCHOOL Adult Bible Classes meets in the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall at 9:15 a.m. Children, Confirmation, and Youth classes also meet at 9:15 a.m. in the class rooms downstairs.



CHILDREN'S CHURCH and NURSERY Following the Children's Message, all children ages 3-7 are invited to Children's Church downstairs. They will return to the sanctuary after the sermon. A nursery attendant is provided for children ages birth to 3 years during our 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM services.



COMMUNION We invite all baptized Christians who acknowledge their sinfulness, trust in Christ as their Savior, and who recognize the real presence of Christ's Body and Blood in the bread and wine to join us at the Communion table. The practice of our congregation is to place the bread into the extended hand of the communicant. The wine is offered in individual cups; please take one from the tray as it is offered by the Elder. The common cup will be offered to those who do not take an individual cup. The cups in the center of the tray are filled with non-alcoholic wine, in consideration of persons who should not drink wine. Also, children who have not received Communion instruction are invited to come to the Communion rail, fold their hands and receive a blessing.